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THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD

MISSIONS

Missionary Efforts in Japan During 1915

Those persons who feared that the European war would be a death blow to the missions in the Far East will have their faith reinforced by reading the review of missions which is given in the *International Review of Missions*. In Japan the war has been used to a surprisingly small extent as an argument against Christianity. Apparently Japanese authorities are gratified to discover that Christianity does not create an individualism such as disparages patriotism. Nevertheless, the prestige of the West has received a blow, and it is anticipated that the missionary will have to commend Christianity on other grounds than that of its power to control national life.

In reviewing the missionary movements that were actually carried through during the year, the visit of the Christian embassy sent by the Federal Churches of Christ in America is given the foremost place. This embassy was composed of Dean Shailer Mathews and Dr. Sidney L. Gulick, and the deputation spent the month of February in Japan, after which a report of exceptional interest was submitted.

The first year's work of the national evangelistic campaign closed in February and produced unusual results. Statistics show that some 164 meetings were held and more than 5,000 were enrolled as inquirers. The organization and addresses have been almost entirely in the hands of the Japanese, and by their splendid handling of all matters have brought to light extraordinary capabilities for leadership, all of which augurs well for the future of Christianity in Japan.

The University Promoting Committee has been busily engaged working out plans for the proposed Christian University,

and there seems to be general agreement that the university should be established on the basis of co-operation between existing educational institutions in Tokyo. The most important event of the year in education, however, has been the permission granted by the Department of Education to Christian middle schools to adopt the name "Chugakubu" ("middle-school department") and thus to have a recognized place in the government scheme of education without being deprived of the right to give religious instruction. But alongside this glowing announcement is one which is more gloomy. In March educational regulations were promulgated which require that all private schools shall follow exactly the government curriculum, and that teachers must know Japanese and hold government certificates, and must prohibit all religious teaching and religious ceremonies in the schools. Schools already established are given ten years' grace to conform to the regulations. This new move on the part of the government seriously threatens the future of mission schools.

Figures are given which show that the Presbyterian and Methodist missions for 1915 have 76,825 communicants and 196,000 adherents, of whom 24,000 were added during the year. The Anglican missions report 5,500 baptized Koreans and 350 baptized Japanese. The Roman Catholic community numbers about 83,000. And the American Bible Society circulated more than double the number of Bibles in any preceding year, the number being 458,694.

Encouraging News from the Bible Society

Many Christians will welcome the report that comes from the Bible Society. Mr. Ritson, secretary of the British and

Foreign Bible Society, sees a rift in the clouds that, owing to the European war, have been lowering and growing more and more threatening before the eyes of the foreign missionaries. Surprising as it appears to us, he has been impelled to say "in my experience there has never been a time when people have taken to the Bible as they are doing now." Apparently Mr. Ritson has adequate reasons for this opinion. For instance, he tells us that the ghastly business of war has not yet caused a single government of the belligerents to interfere with the distribution of Bibles by the Bible Society. Of course this is not more than we should expect, but it is gratifying to learn that since the war began the Bible Society has supplied nearly three million Bibles to fighting men, including prisoners, wounded soldiers, interned civilians, and refugees. All the depots in the capitals of the warring nations, unless it be Warsaw and Belgrade, are still open, and not even the Turk has closed the door of Constantinople. The enormous task which the society has undertaken is inconceivable to most people, for Mr. Ritson informs us that more than forty languages are spoken by those engaged on the different battle fronts, and the Bible is being supplied to all these people in their own language. We cannot escape being impressed by reading this report. What strange companions the Bible and the sword appear among these warring nations! Yet the Bible, in so many of its parts, was produced in such acute struggles of one kind and another that second thought leads one to revise this first impression and to appreciate the natural presence of the Bible in the midst of this struggling, sorrowing host of men and women, when, to quote Haeckel, there is the "problem of multitudes of souls racked by the spiritual stress of the war."

Two other interesting items are, that the Society has recently established a Bible House to serve the inhabitants of some

50,000 miles of the great Amazon water system in South America, and that at the present time the Society is selling more Bibles in Chinese than in English.

Missionaries and Journalism in China

"Christianity has in China today a power over the secular press greater than in America." This striking and sweeping sentence holds the eye of the reader of the article by Mr. Paul Patton Faris, in a recent issue of the *Christian Endeavor World*. According to the writer, the rise of journalism in China in recent years has been most rapid, and now some 200 papers are to be found throughout the empire-republic. Many of these papers are willing and ready to publish articles on religious and moral reform. Indeed, there are some twenty-seven newspapers "whose editors are willing and eager even to outdistance our own in publishing religious news." An instance of this willingness was the occasion when four articles preparatory to Mr. Sherwood Eddy's remarkable meetings for students were sent to the principal centers of China and were widely printed in the papers. In commenting on this occasion Faris writes: "Each of these articles was read by hundreds of thousands of non-Christians . . . perhaps never before has the world seen so rapid and complete an opening of the journalistic door to the message of Christianity." During six months of 1915 over 150 articles were sent to the Chinese press by the press department of the Reform Bureau. The nature of these articles are suggested by the following titles, "War—The World-Madness," "Anti-Footbinding," "Opium Shops—The Disgrace of Shanghai," "Why Believe in Christ?" "How to Become a Christian."

This use of the secular press by the missionaries commends itself as an admirable move on the part of those who are availing themselves of the opportunity. Indeed, the

missionaries are favorably situated when they have the good will of the editors, because it appears that they alone stand between the missionaries and an extensive

use of the Chinese press. The financial outlay is virtually negligible, and a press bureau can be maintained for \$40.00 a month.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Plan to Further Christian Education

During a part of the third week in January a conference of nearly all the active heads of church boards in the United States, and presidents of a majority of the colleges of the country, was held in Chicago. Some seventeen denominations were represented and the Council of the Church Boards considered the proposal of co-operation in an interdenominational, nation-wide campaign for religious education. Dr. G. F. Ream, of the Methodist Episcopal church, was elected secretary for the campaign. It was thought advisable that two or three cities should be selected for denominational centers in which to try out the plan. In considering the relation of the boards to students some interesting facts were brought to light concerning the efforts of the National Christian Association to relate students to church life in their communities. A noteworthy suggestion was considered, namely, that the college church should be abolished in order that students may become more intimately associated with the work of their own church during college days.

Education in Religion Seen from a New Angle

Dr. Bradner says objections are made to religious education on the grounds that it will intensify sectarian jealousy. He finds, as director of the Department of Parochial Education in the Episcopal church, that there are some who are willing to have a dose of religious education but who think more of it would produce bitter feelings and jealousy, and so undermine the community spirit. Writing in the *Churchman* for January 22, Dr. Bradner

affirms that religious education is advancing all along the line and he meets the foregoing objection in rather pointed fashion. In the first place he says that religious intolerance and sectarian jealousy are frequently to be found in persons who are poorly trained in the tenets for which their respective denominations stand. On the other hand the persons best informed and most carefully trained are those who have the most intelligent loyalty and are usually most free from the attitude which fosters discord. By this he means to say that religious education is the very best means by which sectarian jealousy is to be overcome. In the next place he draws upon his experience in connection with religious education and upon his examination of the methods of religious education which are being promoted under the Gary School Plan, and shows to his own satisfaction that religious education, while increasing church consciousness, actually diminishes the spirit of discord.

Hymns in Public Worship

Doubtless many readers will be grateful to Charles H. Richards for his article on the "Evolution of Hymnology" which appeared in the December number of the *Forum*. Very instructive is his historical survey in which he traces the development of hymnology, as it concerns the Christian church, from the "instruments of noise" which accompanied the early psalm singing in the early church when Ambrose improved the church music and made an important place in worship for the singing of choirs and monks; in the time of Calvin who asserted that only hymns that were found in Scripture should be used in worship; under